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PROBER ESCAPED DEATH BY INCHES

Alleged Marcello Friend Beat Him Last Fall

SAN ANTONIO, Tex. (AP) — A Senate rackets investigator eluded death by mere inches when he was beaten in his hotel room here last fall, a local official says.

William Gallinaro, an investigator for the Senate permanent subcommittee on investigations, was hospitalized here for three days and returned to Washington under heavy guard after the assault.

"He suffered an extremely lethal blow to the head that would have been deadly if it had landed a few inches off to one side," County Dist. Atty. Ed Butler said in an interview. Butler met with Gallinaro in Washington for several hours last week.

Gallinaro was beaten a few hours after he interviewed federal prisoner Jack Harold Halfen—said to be a longtime friend of reputed Louisiana rackets figure Carlos Marcello.

Halfen was transferred from his jail cell here to an undisclosed location after the beating.

Gallinaro came to San Antonio because Halfen had asked him to interview him in jail here, Butler said.

Gallinaro's assailants stole notes pertaining to Halfen, Butler said, adding, "Whoever struck Gallinaro was trying to get information on what Halfen had told him."

Halfen received two consecutive five-year prison terms here Tuesday for interstate transportation of forged money orders stolen from a Louisiana bank.

Halfen, 58, of the Houston area, was awaiting trial in the money order case when Gallinaro interviewed him.

Gallinaro's beating was among incidents that prompted a special county grand jury probe of possible organized crime in the San Antonio area. Butler said the jury probably will hold two or three more meetings before completing the investigation.

He said Gallinaro does not know who his assailants were.